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RUSSIA AND THE GREAT WAR. By Gregor Alexinsky. Translated by Bernard Uiall. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915.

Although Senator Beveridge, in *What Is Back of the War,* expressly excludes Russia from his consideration, upon the ground of insufficient knowledge, M. Gregor Alexinsky in his book, *Russia and the Great War,* sets forth anticipations that are altogether similar. In M. Alexinsky's book, one will find no sweeping justification of Russian aims and policies—no series of contentions regarding economic interests and political necessities such as might be placed in a parallel column with the German claims and compared with them. The author, indeed, is patriotic, but his hatred of " Tsarism " is quite as strong as his hostility to Germany. Written from the point of view of a liberal politician, rather than that of a member of the Government or a diplomat, the treatise is interesting as revealing the views of what is presumably a considerable part of the Russian people—views unchanged by the war.

Germany, to be sure, M. Alexinsky regards as the aggressor. In an economic sense Russia was in danger of becoming merely a German colony. Taking advantage of Russia's unfortunate situation during the war with Japan, Germany secured from her Eastern neighbor a customs treaty very favorable to her own interests. The extremely high duties imposed by the treaty of 1904 upon Russian agricultural products imported into Germany protected the German Junkers from the competition of Russian wheat-growers and forced the latter to lower the prices of their products in order to sell them in Germany. The compensatory increase of Russian duties upon German imports did harm rather than good, bearing heavily, as they did, upon the agriculturists, who needed machinery, and upon the industries, which required technical equipment. At the same time the unprecedented development of Germany's military power, her frequent and sometimes successful attempts to intimidate other nations, her growing influence in Turkey, constituted a menace—a menace which inevitably threw France into the arms of Tsarism and drew England into the Triple Entente. Naturally enough, too, Russia was concerned over Austrian and German interference in the Balkans. " Her economic and political situation on the shores of the Black Sea might become absolutely unsupportable and untenable in the event of the Balkans and Constantinople being conquered by Germany and Austria."

Despite these weighty considerations Russia—even official Russia—did not want the war. The people, as a matter of course, did not wish for a war of aggression; they never do. Even the Government showed in a number of ways its eagerness to avoid hostilities. It displayed a conciliatory spirit by making many political concessions, and by a " military recoil " so marked that it was interpreted in France as a kind of infidelity to the Entente. An uneasy fear of

Germany in high quarters manifestly led to a pacific policy. Finally, " Germany has always been represented by the Russian reaction as the surest friend of the autocratic régime in Russia." Indeed, even during the war, the propaganda in favor of Germany as an absolutist nation has been carried on in almost incredible fashion.

In 1914, then, there was in Russia no considerable group which wanted war; and, whatever the selfishness and mistakes of official Russia may have been—and these are not minimized—the German contention that Russia was planning and preparing to go to war in 1918 or 1920 must be dismissed as untenable. To advance such a claim without convincing proof is to substitute suspicion for formal justice in international affairs. And when the crisis came, there was only one course which official Russia could in honor pursue. " I am not a friend of the Russian Government," frankly declares M. Alexinsky. " I do not believe in the ' sincerity ' of the intentions of the autocratic Government. I know that it oppresses many peoples. But this is no reason why it should commit a final act of cowardice and abandon Serbia to the Austro-German sword. Autocratic Tsarism is not a good thing, but would it have been any better had it been guilty of an act of treason to the little Serbian nation which looked to Russia for its salvation? " So far as soundness of world-policy and sincerity of intentions are concerned, it would seem that official Russia and official Germany are tarred with the same stick—the chief difference between them being that a victory for Germany would be far more dangerous to Europe than a Russian triumph because of Germany's superior technical and capitalistic development.

In many ways, M. Alexinsky's book gives an illuminating and often encouraging view of Russian thought and feeling. The sole qualification of its value lies in the fact that, since it is evidently written somewhat from a party point of view, it is not easy to know how large a part of the Russian people share in the author's opinions.

SCANDINAVIA OF THE SCANDINAVIANS. By Henry Goddard Leach. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915.

Scandinavia is at peace; Denmark, Norway and Sweden, since the beginning of the world-war, have drawn together more closely than ever before in a league of mutual unity and protection, forgetting old rivalries and prejudices. It is partly for this reason, no doubt, that Mr. Leach's book, *Scandinavia of the Scandinavians,* makes rather especially pleasant reading at this time. The volume, though brief and of diversified contents, is neither superficial nor perfunctory; it balances the claims of an agreeably humane and imaginative curiosity with those of the craving for definite information. Briefly Mr. Leach sketches the history of each of the three